

RESEARCH ON EVIL:
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Most annotated bibliographies begin by noting how vast the literature on a certain subject is and how impossible it would be to present to eager readers a complete picture of the literature available. What is unusual is to claim that this vast array of books falls into fairly discrete subcategories. And yet, this is, to some extent, the case with books on evil. Disciplinary approaches divide the study of evil by the ways in which they define or explain it. Legal studies take on evil as crime. Psychological studies of evil focus on the individuals who have committed evil deeds. Theological approaches deal with evil as sin. Philosophical works take up evil as a problem about whether or not, and how, there can be an all-good, all-powerful God given the extent and kinds of evil in the world today. For the sociologist, evil is studied as, in part or wholly, a result of the social forces at work shaping and misshaping individuals and institutions. History books narrate particular events deemed evil. In every case, though, the subject of evil is seen as intricately connected to the most important questions we face as humans, living our lives and living our lives together.

Listed below are several categories of books on evil, each with representative selections. The list of categories is not exhaustive but should give the reader a sense of the map of “evil studies” and a way to navigate through it in light of the specific interests she or he might have.

Classics in the Study of Evil

Certain works are cited again and again in writings on evil. These works span numerous centuries, geographical areas, and writing genres; their authors include Christian theologians, atheist philoso-

phers, Jewish intellectuals, Russian novelists. What they have in common is a deep grappling with the nature of evil. Is evil a person, e.g., Satan, or a force at work in the world and in the wills of humans? Is evil the distortion of good or the lack of a measure of goodness? Is evil a radical choice or a banal thought-less-ness? Is God responsible for evil or are humans? How do humans conceive of evil and how does that relate to their understandings of human nature, the good, and God?

- Aquinas, Thomas. *On Evil*. Trans. Jean Oesterle. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995.
- Arendt, Hannah. *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. Revised and Enlarged Edition. New York: Viking, 1965.
- Augustine. *The City of God*. Trans. Henry Bettenson. New York: Penguin, 1984.
- ————. *Confessions*. Trans. F. J. Sheed. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1992.
- Dostoyevsky, Fyodor. *The Brothers Karamazov: A Novel in Four Parts*. Trans. Richard Peaver and Larissa Volokhonsky. New York: Vintage, 1991.
- Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Trans. James Strachey. New York: Norton, 1961.
- Hume, David. *Principal Writings on Religion*. Ed. J. C. A. Gaskin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*. Trans. Theodore M. Greene and Hoyt H. Hudson. New York: Harper & Row, 1960.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Beyond Good and Evil*. Trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Random House, 1966.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *The Symbolism of Evil*. Trans. Emerson Buchanan. Boston: Beacon, 1967.

The Psychology of the Evil Individual

While some books focus on the social conditions that foster violence, propel injustice, or misshape societies, the following books

focus either on the inner workings of individuals who have committed horrendous crimes, acts so bad as to merit the appellation “evil,” or on individuals’ understandings of evil and how they come to see something as “evil.” These psychologically oriented books take the forms of interviews, with the executors of evil (e.g., Goldberg), their victims, or those who have had experiences of evil (e.g., Alford); write-ups of findings of psychological studies and/or case studies from clinical practices (e.g., Peck); meditations on the motivations for committing evil deeds (e.g., Diamond); discussions of how individuals conceive of evil, what form it takes in their imaginations or in their lives (e.g., Jung). One assumption and hope of many of these works is that by studying the psychology of individuals who commit evil, we will learn something about how to prevent or reduce its occurrence. The strength of this approach is its ability to show us the complexities of evil: how varied its motivations are, how powerfully destructive one individual can be, how evil often breeds itself in its victims. Two limitations of this approach, which moves from the inside out, are, first, its temptation to reduce evil to biochemistry or unhappy life experiences and in the process to eclipse the agency involved in acts of evil, and, second, its tendency to ignore the larger social forces at work in shaping moral development and understandings of evil.

- Alford, C. Fred. *What Evil Means to Us*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997.
- Baumeister, Roy F. *Evil: Inside Human Violence and Cruelty*. New York: Freeman, 1997.
- Diamond, Stephen A. *Anger, Madness, and the Daimonic: The Psychological Genesis of Violence, Evil, and Creativity*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996.
- Goldberg, Carl. *Speaking with the Devil: Exploring Senseless Acts of Evil*. New York: Penguin, 1996.
- Jung, C. G. *Jung on Evil*. Ed. Murray Stein. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.
- Peck, M. Scott. *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983.

Evil as a Social Problem

Sociologists are unlikely to use the word “evil” in their discussions of social life. But when they do, their focus is often on the social conditions that are conducive to widespread violence and crime. The health of society is at issue in these social problems. The onus for resisting evil is placed on transforming social institutions and conditions, such that the individuals and communities within them will be morally bound to each other in constructive ways. Like the psychologist, the sociologist may err in eclipsing the agency of evil doers, but not because she reduces evil acts to biochemistry or certain life experiences, but rather because she may find the partial explanation of social causes to be sufficient explanation for why an individual does what he does. Nevertheless, sociological studies make a vital contribution to the study of a subject that has for so long been discussed in abstract terms with no empirical grounding, particularly since the evils that result from corrupt social structures have a much greater capacity for destruction than does a single individual.

- Hibbert, Christopher. *The Roots of Evil: A Social History of Crime and Punishment*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1963.
- Katz, Fred E. *Ordinary People and Extraordinary Evil: A Report on the Beguilings of Evil*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993.
- Katz, Jack. *Seductions of Crime: The Moral and Sensual Attraction of Doing Evil*. New York: Basic, 1988.
- Lemert, Edwin M. *The Trouble With Evil: Social Control at the Edge of Morality*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.
- Oppenheimer, Paul. *Evil and the Demonic: A New Theory of Monstrous Behavior*. New York: New York University Press, 1996.
- Pillsbury, Samuel H. *Judging Evil: Rethinking the Law of Murder and Manslaughter*. New York: New York University Press, 1998.
- Sanford, Nevitt, Craig Comstock, and Associates, eds. *Sanctions for Evil: Sources of Social Destructiveness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1971.

God and the Problem of Evil

Probably the largest category of writings on evil are those dealing with the problem presented to belief in an all-good, all-powerful God by the occurrence of evil in the world. Being all-good, the argument goes, God would not want there to be any evil and suffering. Being all-powerful, God would be able to prevent any and all evil and suffering from occurring. And yet, there is evil in the world. Is God either not all-good or not all-powerful? Is evil not really evil, but a necessary part of a good plan? Philosophers and theologians have argued and written about this problem for centuries. Some argue that the simple and most logical answer to the problem is that there is no God, i.e., the existence of evil is proof that God does not exist or gives reason to believe that it is more probable than not that God does not exist. Theodicies argue for God's existence and defend God's goodness and omnipotence. These arguments take numerous forms, but most suggest some reason, some greater good, God might have for permitting evil. Finally there are those who argue that the effort put into writing theodicies is misguided: we simply cannot know why God permits evils, and we should be spending our time and effort trying to prevent and resist evil, to alleviate suffering, and to make sure that justice is carried out.

- Adams, Marilyn McCord. *Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999.
- Adams, Marilyn McCord, and Robert Merihew Adams, eds. *The Problem of Evil*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Buber, Martin. *Good and Evil*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952.
- Chopp, Rebecca S. *The Praxis of Suffering: An Interpretation of Liberation and Political Theologies*. Mary Knoll: Orbis Books, 1986.
- Farley, Edward. *Good and Evil: Interpreting a Human Condition*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.
- Farley, Wendy. *Tragic Vision and Divine Compassion: A Contemporary Theodicy*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1990.

- Griffin, David Rey. *Evil Revisited: Responses and Reconsiderations*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991.
- Hick, John. *Evil and the God of Love*. Revised Edition. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978.
- Leaman, Oliver. *Evil and Suffering in Jewish Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Levenson, Jon D. *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- Peterson, Michael L., ed. *The Problem of Evil: Selected Readings*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992.
- Pinn, Anthony B. *Why, Lord?: Suffering and Evil in Black Theology*. New York: Continuum, 1995.
- Plantinga, Alvin. *God, Freedom, and Evil*. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.
- Surin, Kenneth. *Theology and the Problem of Evil*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.
- Swinburne, Richard. *Providence and the Problem of Evil*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1998.
- Tilley, Terence. *The Evils of Theodicy*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1991.

Philosophy and Evil

While philosophy of religion books contend with the problem evil raises for belief in God, another vein of philosophy takes up the subject of evil quite apart from any questions about God. Tracing their roots to Kant's idea of radical evil and considering the failures of Western societies to achieve the ideals proposed by the Enlightenment, these books contend with the questions: How are we to understand evil and human nature? What does the occurrence of evil say about our moral life? Is the human will evil at its base? Is it possible to overcome evil?

- Copjec, Joan, ed. *Radical Evil*. London: Verso, 1996.

- Kekes, John. *Facing Evil*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Midgley, Mary. *Wickedness: A Philosophical Essay*. London: Routledge, 1984.
- Taylor, Richard. *Good and Evil*. Revised Edition. Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2000.

Evil in Anthropology and World Religions

Most of the writings in this bibliography focus on Western perspectives on evil, but the following books either examine other cultures' views on evil or compare Western views of evil with those of other cultures, and in doing so, they provide an important perspective on our own understandings of evil.

- Alford, C. Fred. *Think No Evil: Korean Values in the Age of Globalization*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- Bowker, John. *Problems of Suffering in the Religions of the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.
- Boyd, J. W. *Satan and Mara: Christian and Buddhist Symbols of Evil*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975.
- Doniger O'Flaherty, Wendy. *The Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.
- Parkin, David, ed. *The Anthropology of Evil*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985.

Evil and Literature

Literature has been a vital part of discussions of evil from at least the time of the writing of Job. More and more philosophers and theologians are turning to literature in their discussions of our moral life. Certain literary texts have become touchstones in discussions of evil: e.g., Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. While many writings make reference to literature in their discussions of evil, a few books focus

explicitly on the relation between literature and evil, discussing the ways specific literary works present evil to us (e.g., Bataille); arguing that certain genres explore the sorts of questions that are raised by experiences of evil (e.g., Bouchard); or suggesting that literature can draw us into fascinated admiration for evil through glamorous (mis)representations of it (e.g., Shattuck).

- Bataille, George. *Literature and Evil*. Trans. Alastair Hamilton. New York: Marion Boyars, 1985.
- Bouchard, Larry. *Tragic Method and Tragic Theology: Evil in Contemporary Drama and Religious Thought*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989.
- McGinn, Colin. *Ethics, Evil, and Fiction*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1997.
- Shattuck, Roger. *Forbidden Knowledge: From Prometheus to Pornography*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996.
- Tolczyk, Dariusz. *See No Evil: Literary Cover-Ups and Discoveries of the Soviet-Camp Experience*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.

Evil and the Gothic

Ten years ago, a bibliography on evil would not have included such a section, but in the past decade, interest in the Gothic, both as a literary genre and as a cultural phenomenon, has soared, and it is shaping our cultural understandings of evil, particularly those held by younger generations. Several elements of the Gothic have caught the attention of those interested in evil: its exploration of horror, violence, and terror; its engagement with the supernatural and its setting in an eerie past; and its focus on the mysterious, evil other. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when rationality was being championed in intellectual circles, the Gothic novel was exploring the irrational and the limits of rationality, bringing to the fore in literature what was being repressed in intellectual life. A similar situation is seen by many to be occurring today. The very idea of evil is being eclipsed by, among other things: the hyperbolically pos-

itive rhetoric of advertising; the new-age, self-help industry; the expectation that humans will be able to choose not just some specific traits, but everything about themselves (or at least their children-to-be). Eclipsed by these cultural phenomena, interest in evil erupts in other places. What follows are a few of the books that take up the Gothic as either a culture, a genre, or a way of thinking about evil.

- Edmundson, Mark. *Nightmare on Main Street: Angels, Sadomasochism, and the Culture of Gothic*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Davenport-Hines, Richard. *Gothic: Four Hundred Years of Excess, Horror, Evil, and Ruin*. New York: North Point, 1999.
- Halttunen, Karen. *Murder Most Foul: The Killer and the American Gothic Imagination*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Martin, Robert K., and Eric Savoy, eds. *American Gothic: New Interventions in a National Narrative*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1998.
- Punter, David, ed. *The Literature of Horror: A Companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.

Evil, Suffering, and Pain

Suffering has been evil's partner for centuries; it is evil's effect, its flip side. Discussions of evil cannot help but speak of suffering. However the two books listed below stand out in their attempts at understanding the personal and cultural significance of suffering; they focus specifically on the phenomenology of suffering and pain, on what the experience of pain is like, and how it both is shaped by the world and social context in which it occurs and shapes, or more accurately, misshapes the world for those who undergo it:

- Morris, David B. *The Culture of Pain*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
- Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Women, Feminism, and Evil

The connection made throughout history between women and evil is sorely obvious to anyone who takes a moment to think about it. Eve is often portrayed as the source of all evil, as both weak in giving in to the serpent's temptation and wily in leading Adam astray. Feminist thought has pointed out the ways in which women have been relegated to the margins, and, worse, made to be the evil other of men, and a long list of books could be listed as dealing with the equating of women and/or the feminine with what is wrong with the world. However, a few books specifically take up the connection between women and evil:

- Noddings, Nel. *Women and Evil*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.
- Sands, Kathleen M. *Escape from Paradise: Evil and Tragedy in Feminist Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994.

The Devil and The Antichrist

While Satan's death has recently been reported (Delbanco), he has had a long and lively career. Jeffrey Burton Russell's historical series on this figure, under his various aliases (the Devil, Lucifer, Mephistopheles, Prince of Darkness, Satan) is hard to surpass, for the sheer amount of information it brings to those interested in evil's most prominent representative. But these and other books on the devil—as well as those on evil's second most prominent representative, the Antichrist—are not mere biography: they chart conceptions of evil through time, externalizations of cultural understandings of evil, and ways in which societies or groups locate an other who is labeled evil.

- Delbanco, Andrew. *The Death of Satan: How Americans Have Lost the Sense of Evil*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995.
- Forsyth, Neil. *The Old Enemy: Satan and the Combat Myth*. New York: Random House, 1995.

- Fuller, Robert. *Naming the Antichrist: The History of an American Obsession*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- McGinn, Bernard. *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.
- Pagels, Elaine. *The Origin of Satan*. New York: Random House, 1995.
- Russell, Jeffrey Burton. *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977.
- ————. *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984.
- ————. *Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986.
- ————. *The Prince of Darkness: Radical Evil and the Power of Good in History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- ————. *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981.

Evil in History: The Holocaust

Historic evils abound but one, in particular, has focused discussions of evil: the Holocaust. Almost all recent writings on evil refer at some point to the Holocaust, and some of the most profound writings on the subject of evil are those written specifically about the Holocaust. Anyone interested in evil would do well to consider reading any number of the following books.

- Bauman, Zygmunt. *Modernity and the Holocaust*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989.
- Browning, Christopher R. *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*. New York: HarperCollins, 1992.
- Hilberg, Raul. *The Destruction of the European Jews*. Three Volumes. Second Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.

- Lang, Berel. *The Future of the Holocaust: Between History and Memory*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999.
- Thomas, Laurence Mordekhai. *Vessels of Evil: American Slavery and the Holocaust*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993.
- Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. Second Edition. Trans. Stella Rodway. New York: Bantam, 2000.
- ———, and Philippe-Michaël de Saint-Cheron. *Evil and Exile*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1990.

THE NEW TESTAMENT DOCTRINE OF SATAN

WILLIAM G. BELLSHAW
Dean, San Francisco Conservative Baptist
Theological Seminary

THE REVELATION CONCERNING HIS PERSONALITY

A proper and a logical place to begin any discussion of the New Testament revelation of Satan is to begin with the evidence for his personality. Every reference to Satan in the New Testament is an argument for his existence. Some simply believe Satan is the personification of evil, and so they deny his personality. In essence, they spell "devil" without the letter "d." This is not an accurate nor an adequate view of the Scriptural teaching.

He Possesses the Nature of a Personality

One of the accepted methods of demonstrating that an entity is a real person is by presenting proof of its possession of intellect, emotions and will. All three of these are possessed by Satan.

Satan's Intellect. Satan's intellectual abilities are clearly demonstrated in the New Testament. Two will be selected as representative of the many which could be given. First, Satan tempted Christ (Matt. 4:1-11). The Lord dealt with Satan as a real person. If this statement is denied, then all rational interpretation of these verses is hopeless. Satan demonstrated his intellect by recalling from memory a portion of the Old Testament, Psalm 91:11, 12 (Matt. 4:6). In general, the application of this section to the situation at hand was appropriate, which is another demonstration of intellectual ability. His omission of an important part of the context (Psalm 91:1) points out that he has the ability to twist and pervert written documents to suit his purposes.

Second, the Apostle Paul pointed out that Satan might get an advantage over the saint (II Cor. 2:11). However, it is not necessary for him to be victorious since believers can know about his devices. The word "devices" translates the word *noëma*. The basic meaning of the word is "thought or mind."¹ It may be used in an evil sense, as here, of "design or plot." Such ability does demonstrate that Satan possesses intellect.

Satan's Emotions. One verse clearly points out an emotion in connection with Satan. At the middle of the Tribulation, Satan will be cast out of heaven. He then initiates a time of severe persecution against Israel. His attitude toward the nation is described in Revelation 12:17, "And

the dragon was wroth with the woman." The verb used here is orgizō. Pride also may be predicated of Satan in I Timothy 3:6.

Satan's Will. It is indicated in II Timothy 2:26 that there are those "who are taken captive by him at his will." Other expressions of his will are seen in the fact that he tempts (I Cor. 7:5), he filled the heart of Ananias and Sapphira to lie to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3), he put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ (John 13:2), and he afflicted men (Acts 10:38).

He Possesses the Names of a Personality

There are at least eighteen names for Satan used in the New Testament. Many of these titles can only be understood when applied to a person. Not only do these names argue for his personality, but they also outline his general character and work. These are listed in alphabetical order. A number of them are descriptive titles, while others are proper names.

Abaddon, Apollyon. Abaddon is the Hebrew name for the angel of the abyss (Rev. 9:11). The Greek name which corresponds to it is Apollyon which means "destroyer." Some identify this king of the locusts, who will come out of the abyss, as Satan.² Others believe he is the Antichrist.³ A few are content simply to identify this one as an angelic being.⁴

Accuser of the Brethren. This idea is only found in Revelation 12:10. The words "which accused" are the translation of an articular present participle, indicating a continual work. The words "night and day" confirm this idea. The belief that Satan was the accuser of sinful men was widespread in Judaism.⁵ The ones who are the objects of this accusation are evidently the tribulation saints, and his accusing work seems to end at this time.⁶

Adversary. This word is the translation of antidikos which is a legal word used in the sense of an opponent in a lawsuit (Luke 12:58).⁷ It is used of Satan in I Peter 5:8. Possibly here and in Luke 18:3 it does not have a legal connotation, and so it simply means an enemy. However, Peter could be using it in a legal sense with respect to Satan, and then it would be similar to the idea of Revelation 12:10. Another reference to "adversary" is found in I Timothy 5:14. The word in the original text is antikeimai. There is some question as to whether or not this refers to Satan.⁸

Beelzebub. Both the orthography and the meaning of this word are disputed. It is found seven times in the New Testament.⁹ It seems clear that Baalzebub and Beelzebub are the same name, although it is impossible to account for the change in spelling. The most probable meaning is "the god of Ekron. . . with the sense of the lord of filth," referring to idolatrous sacrifice.¹⁰ Another possibility, but less likely, is that it "means the lord of habitation, i.e., the one who dwells in the possessed, or the lord of the heavenly abode on high."¹¹

Belial. This name for Satan is only found in II Corinthians 6:15. It means "worthlessness."¹² In the inter-testamental period it came to be used as a name for Satan.¹³ W. E. Vine does not accept this as a reference to Satan, but understands it as a personification of impure worship especially connected with the cult of Aphrodite.¹⁴ Paul's usage of the word places this

one in direct opposition to Christ. Therefore, it is also understandable that some would take it as a reference to Antichrist.¹⁵

The One Deceiving the Whole World. John makes reference to Satan in this way in Revelation 12:9. It is probably more of a description than a title, but the words "the one deceiving" are an articular present participle which is clearly a substantive use of the verbal adjective. The word "world" is the object of the participle, and it is the word *oikoumenē* referring to the whole inhabited earth. A confirmation of such an idea may be found in II Corinthians 4:4.

Devil. The word "devil" is probably the most familiar of the designations for Satan. It occurs more frequently than any other term.¹⁶ The word *diabolos* is not the only word translated "devil" in the King James Version, but the Greek word is found 38 times. In three instances (I Tim. 3:11, II Tim. 3:3, Titus 2:3) it is not used of Satan. Possibly John 6:70 might be added to the list. Foerster believes that the usage of the word

...seems to force us to the conclusion that "accuser" is not the primary meaning. Since the rendering "seducer" does not fit all the contexts, "adversary" is the required translation. The work of the adversary implies always an attempt on the part of the *diabolos* to separate God and man. It is an open question whether the verb *diaballein* influenced the usage.¹⁷

Arndt and Gingrich suggest the idea of "slanderer" as the significance of *diabolos*.¹⁸

Dragon. The book of Revelation is the only one which contains this designation of Satan, and it appears 13 times (*drakōn*). Of these 13 occurrences, 8 are found in chapter 12 and 3 in chapter 13. It is the key name for Satan in Revelation. The word basically refers to a "'serpent,' esp. 'dragon' or 'sea-monster.'"¹⁹ The imagery of a dragon in the book might suggest great size and a frightening appearance.²⁰

Enemy. The adjective *echthros* is used in a number of ways in the New Testament.²¹ It is clearly used of Satan in Matthew 13:39; therefore, the references to the enemy in Matthew 13:25, 28 are also of Satan. Luke 10:19 may be added to the list. The basic meaning of the word is "hatred," and it characterizes Satan's attitude in an absolute sense. He hates both God and His spiritual children.

Father of Lies. The reference to Satan as a father is found in John 8:44. The word "father" is used "metaphorically, of the originator of a family or company of persons animated by the same spirit as himself."²² He is also spoken of as "father" in verses 38 and 41. Satan, then, was the first and greatest liar.

God of this Age. The only place where this phrase is mentioned is II Corinthians 4:4. The New Testament states that this age is evil (Gal. 1:4), and Satan is presented as its god.

Murderer. The particular word for murderer in John 8:44 is *anthropoktonos*, an adjective literally meaning a manslayer. Two other occurrences of the word are found in I John 3:15, and they describe one who does not possess eternal life. The most consistent view of these

verses in I John understands the murder to be taken literally, since the context does refer to a literal murder (verse 12). Hatred, according to John, is the motive which produces physical murder. Satan hates God and His people, so the motive for real murder is present in his life. Furthermore, there are instances in the Bible where Satan is the prime suspect as the ultimate force behind a physical murder (e.g. Gen. 4:8; Rev. 11:7).²³

The Prince of the Power of the Air. Ephesians 2:2 is the verse which contains this reference. W. E. Vine believes that "'the air' being that sphere in which the inhabitants of the world live and which, through the rebellious and godless condition of humanity, constitutes the seat of his authority."²⁴

The Prince of this World. John is the only author to so designate Satan. The phrase is found in John 12:31; 14:30 and 16:11. The word "world" is *kosmos* which refers primarily to things (I John 2:15). Such things have a strong attraction for the eye, the flesh and the pride of ownership (I John 2:16). Satan rules over these things, and they lie in his lap (I John 5:19). Christians may use these things of the world, but they are not to abuse them (I Cor. 7:31). One will not abuse them if he puts Christ first (I Cor. 7:31), and he uses these things as a means to an end (I Cor. 7:29, 30). Furthermore, Christians are not to love the world (I John 2:15), but they are to love the Father (I John 2:16) and His will (I John 2:17).

Roaring Lion. The reference to a roaring lion in II Peter 5:8, 9 is obviously a literal lion to whom Satan's ministry is likened. This is "a graphic simile depicting the strength, ubiquity, and destructiveness of evil."²⁵ "The danger in mind here is probably that of denying the faith, of being pressed or frightened into ceasing to confess Christ."²⁶ Some have identified the lion of II Timothy 4:17 as Satan, but this is probably not correct.²⁷

Satan. The term *Satanas* is the second most frequently used word to describe the Devil. It occurs 35 times in 12 books of the New Testament. Two of these references are used of Peter (Matt. 16:23; Mark 8:33); however, they may be used in the sense of a Satan-like man. Some believe there is no material distinction between the names "Satan" and "Devil" in the New Testament.²⁸ The meanings of the two words are certainly closely related. The lexicons generally translate *Satanas* by "adversary."²⁹

Serpent. Satan is referred to as a serpent 5 times in the New Testament, and all except one of the references are found in Revelation (II Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9, 14, 15; 20:2). The word *ophis* symbolizes the origin of sin in the Garden of Eden, its hatefulness and deadly effect. The characteristics of the serpent in the Bible are mainly evil, emphasizing its treachery, its venom, its skulking, and its murderous proclivities.³⁰

Tempter. On two occasions in the New Testament Satan is referred to as the tempter (Matt. 4:3; I Thess. 3:5). In both cases the word is the translation of a present articular participle derived from the verb *peirazō*. That he continually acts in this manner may be seen from the numerous references to his tempting work (I Cor. 7:5; I Thess. 3:5; Rev. 2:10). It is interesting to note here that a similar verb, *dokimazō*, is not used with Satan as the subject. It generally means "to prove with the expectation that the object will pass the test." This is never Satan's desire.

The Wicked One. The adjective ponēros generally emphasizes evil in an active sense. Another frequently used adjective is kakos which is wider in its scope, but ponēros is much stronger. Kakos is never used as a designation for Satan.

Conclusion

These are the principal titles or descriptions of Satan in the New Testament. No doubt this list is not complete, but it is sufficient to draw several conclusions.

First, there is significant variety in the working of Satan. This fact accounts for the failure to find a single name which is adequate to describe him. No single word is sufficiently broad enough to present his complete personality effectively.

Second, two names constitute the major designations of Satan. These are the titles "Satan" and the "Devil." As was noted above, there is a good deal of similarity between these two terms. If any single word were sufficient to encompass these two names, it would be the definition "adversary." This appears to be the most comprehensive idea found in the New Testament description. Satan is actively opposed to God and His people, and that opposition manifests itself in the various ways indicated by the titles mentioned above.

Third, Satan is an extremely formidable enemy for the Christian to face in his daily walk. When it is recognized that his abilities range as far as they do, the saint must then realize his need for complete dependence upon the resources God has placed at his disposal to defeat Satan. Another section of this study will outline these resources.

Fourth, Satan is indeed a true personality. This is demonstrated not only by the fact that he possesses an intellect, emotions, and a will, but also by the personal characteristics exhibited in his names. The variety and complexity of these titles do not point in the direction of an impersonal force for evil.

THE REVELATION CONCERNING HIS POWER

An understanding of Satan's power is an important link in appreciating his work today. It will also guard against any mistaken notions that he can be defeated by unaided human ability.

Satan's Personal Power

It Is Large. Even a cursory study of the New Testament revelation regarding Satan will reveal that his power is extensive. It extends into realms which are beyond the capabilities of man to reach. Four particular areas may be mentioned, and no doubt others could be added which are not considered here. First, he has power in the governmental realm. A classic example of his authority in this area is found in Matthew 4:8, 9. Satan stated he would give Christ all the kingdoms of the world in return for Christ's worship. In order for this event to

make sense, Satan must have had something to give. His authority was not an inherent right, but he evidently usurped it. Twice it is stated that all the kingdoms of the world were involved. No other created being can make these claims.

The passages mentioned under the title "god of this age," "prince of the power of the air," and "prince of this world" also indicate Satan's power in the governmental realm. Revelation 2:13 presents the truth that Satan had a throne (see Greek text) located in the city of Pergamos. The exact meaning of the statement is not made clear in the text, but it does speak of rulership and authority.

Second, he has power in the physical realm. A few examples to demonstrate the validity of this point may be seen in the New Testament. A Jewish woman was bound with "a spirit of infirmity eighteen years," and Satan was the cause (Luke 13:11, 16). Christ during His earthly ministry healed many who were oppressed by the devil (*katadunasteuō*). The word "oppressed" refers to the tyrannical rule of Satan over an individual.³¹ The words in I Corinthians 5:5, "to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh" have obvious physical connotations. Paul experienced the buffeting of Satan (II Cor. 12:7). Many believe that this affliction was physical in nature. The situation mentioned in I Timothy 1:20 of Hymenaeus and Alexander being delivered³² over to Satan may be the same type of case as that considered in I Corinthians 5:5. Physical trials are also directly attributed to Satan. Revelation 2:10 states, "the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried." The sifting of Peter depicts a real and meaningful affliction of the Apostle in the physical realm. Satan's "power of death" is difficult to interpret precisely, but physical death seems to be in view (Heb. 2:14, 15). That power was rendered inoperative by the death of Christ at least as far as believers are concerned.³³

Third, he has power in the angelic realm. The foremost example of Satan's power in the angelic realm is found in Jude 9. Michael the archangel is said to have contended with the devil regarding the body of Moses. Barnhouse believed that Michael had the responsibility of burying the body of Moses, and Satan attempted to interfere with his work.³⁴ There was nothing Michael could do. He could not even bring a railing accusation against him, but he had to call upon the Lord to rebuke Satan. Among the fallen angels there are clearly defined orders (Eph. 6:12). The idea contained in Matthew 12:26 is that Satan's domain is well organized. The implication of Ephesians 6:11 is that Satan is at the head of these ranks of fallen beings.

The position that Satan is part of the angelic hosts, and so may be spoken of as an angel is open to question. Several points present a strong case against his being referred to as an angel. The event noted above regarding his encounter with Michael the archangel indicates he is more powerful than the greatest angelic being. The term archangel may suggest that there is only one spirit being with that title. It is not used of any other being (I Thess. 4:16, Jude 9). However, Daniel 10:13 states that Michael is one of the chief princes. Whether these chief princes are the same as archangels cannot be determined with dogmatism. The Septuagint does not translate it with the word archangelos (the Septuagint reads: *Michaēl heis tōn archontōn tōn prōtōn*).³⁵ If there is only a single archangel, and Satan is more powerful than he, this would appear to place him outside that category.

The statement of II Corinthians 11:14 is sometimes offered as proof that he is an angel. The verb used in the verse (metaschēmātizetai) simply states that he masquerades as an angel. He takes the outward form of one. Certainly no one would claim that he is an angel of light. His whole life is dominated by darkness. Who is the object of his deception? The answer seems to be the good angels. Satan has some purpose in attempting to make them think he is a good angel and so confuse them. Masquerading as a good angel would not have any purpose for men since they do not have the ability to recognize good angels. On the other hand, Satan's ministers operate in the human realm, and do cause problems among God's children because they masquerade (same verb) as ministers of righteousness (I Cor. 11:13, 15).

The word "angel" signifies a particular task, that of being a messenger. Satan seems never to have had that function even before his fall. He is specifically called a cherub (Ezek. 28:14), and cherubim appear to be involved in the government of God. Satan is the only one said to be an "anointed cherub" (Ezek. 28:14). This may indicate that he was the greatest cherub and had the highest position within that rank. Ezekiel 28:12 pictures him as the greatest creation of God.

The verse which constitutes the closest proof that Satan is an angel is Revelation 9:11. However, one must establish conclusively that Satan is Abaddon in order for this to be a valid proof. The soundest view is to speak of the beings as a whole as spirit beings, including angels, cherubim and other ranks of spirit beings.³⁶

Fourth, he has power in the ecclesiastical realm. False religious groups are attributed to Satan by the words of John in Revelation 2:9 and 3:9. Certain Jews are said to be of the synagogue of Satan. Paul reveals that in the latter times of the church some will depart from the faith and give heed to the teaching propagated by demons (I Tim. 4:1). The word daimoniōn appears to be a subjective genitive (demons' teaching), and not an objective genitive (teaching about demons). The source of the teaching is from demons, and the possibility of such a practice may be seen in John 13:2, 27 and II Thessalonians 2:9.³⁷ Satan's relationship to demons indicates his direction of such practices.

It Is Limited. Although Satan's powers extend to a large area of the created sphere, it is clearly limited. Satan is not always victorious. God has never lost a battle against Satan; otherwise the omnipotence of God could be called into question. Jennings in his helpful work on Satan lists several characteristics indicating the limitation of Satan. He includes such factors as the lack of divine attributes (e.g. omnipotence and omniscience), his failure to be able to foretell the future, and his inability to give life.³⁸ However, he does not list many specific examples from the Scripture verifying his belief.

Several specific examples of his limitation are evident in the New Testament. The sifting of Peter affords one example (Luke 22:31). After the Lord revealed that Satan requested (exaiteō) the opportunity of sifting Peter, He then revealed that He prayed for Peter that his faith would not fail (verse 32). The subsequent history of Peter demonstrates that the Lord's prayer was answered. Satan was evidently allowed to go only so far with the sifting of Peter. The Lord's rebuke of Satan in Jude 9 indicates that he is not omnipotent. Christians are able to

successfully withstand the attacks of Satan if they follow the principles God has set forth in His Word (Eph. 6:11, 13, 16). James agrees with Paul that the devil can be successfully withstood and made to flee (Jas. 4:7). According to Romans 16:20, Satan is going to be bruised under the feet of the saints shortly. In the Tribulation a battle will be fought between Michael and his angels and Satan and his angels (Rev. 12:7). In this war Satan is defeated (verse 8), and he is cast out of heaven (verse 9). His ultimate doom is the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10).

These examples are sufficient to demonstrate that Satan is a finite creature. He is limited by the permissive will of God, and also, where this is involved, by the will of the individual who is the object of his attack. He has great knowledge, but it is limited. His powers are vast, but they may be employed only within the scope of God's plans. Such knowledge concerning this spirit being is a comfort to the child of God who believes the information God has given in His Word. God has informed us in I John 4:4, "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

Satan's Potential Power

Its Extension by the Demons. Since the subject of this study does not concern itself with the work of demons, their work will only be briefly mentioned. Satan does not possess the attribute of omnipresence. He is limited in time and space to one locality. It is clear, however, that he can move very rapidly from one place to another (Matt. 4:5, 8). Satan delegates responsibility to demons, and they enable him to continue his operations on a vast scale. The closely organized system (Eph. 6:12) of the devil is represented by many evil spirits. An example may be seen in Mark 5:9 ("My name is Legion: for we are many"). "If we may put any stress on the meaning of the name, it is highly significant to note that in the time of Augustus a Roman legion counted 6,100 foot soldiers and 726 horsemen."³⁹ Satan's personal power is greatly expanded by the large number of demons who serve him.

Its Culmination in the Man of Sin. The apex of Satan's power may be reached when he carries on his work on earth through the Antichrist. The removal of the Spirit's restraint allows this greatly increased power (II Thess. 2:6, 7). The Man of Sin will be a world ruler, evidently attaining that position at the middle of the Tribulation when he breaks his covenant with the Jews (Rev. 13:1-10; Dan. 9:27). Paul states that the Man of Sin will be energized by Satan (II Thess. 2:9). It has always been Satan's desire to be worshiped and treated like God (Isa. 14:14), and he apparently gains that goal through the Man of Sin (II Thess. 2:4). Immediately at the conclusion of Antichrist's world rule of three and one-half years, Satan will be bound for 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-3). He will be loosed at the close of the Millennium, and although he gathers a large force around himself to make one last attack upon God, his rebellion is crushed by fire from heaven (Rev. 20:9).

THE REVELATION CONCERNING HIS PURPOSE

The Purpose Expounded

A study of Scripture reveals that proposals which created beings advance are often allowed by God to be put to an experimental test. Some would classify Israel's demand for a king in this category. The story of Job may also be presented as a case in point. Satan contended that if sufficient duress were placed upon Job, he would repudiate God. God knew that this was not true, and He could simply have denied Satan's allegation. However, Satan was given the opportunity to test his claim. It was a costly method for Job and his family. However, an abundant victory was gained which has paid off in rich dividends in the lives of those who have profited from the example of this Old Testament hero.⁴⁰

Granting the truthfulness of the claim that God does put the creature's assumptions to an experimental test, it becomes clear that Satan's determination--which constituted his initial sin--to build a vast structure of independent relationships around himself as the center and wholly autonomous with respect to the Creator to whom all allegiance and obedience rightfully belong, was permitted of God to be tested experimentally to its bitter end. As for the wisdom of such a stupendous procedure on the part of God, no creature could ever be placed in a position where he could possess a sufficient number of related facts, or attain to a perspective, on the basis of which he could sit in judgment. The observable actualities point in but one direction: Satan did propose such a course; God could have hindered him, but He rather allowed Satan to take the course he desired to follow, and to allow that course to become, in the end, ground of its own universal condemnation.⁴¹

The Purpose Illustrated

Satan's great purpose to operate independently of God may be traced through both the Old and New Testaments. Such was the point of the temptation of Eve (Gen. 3). His own history as traced in Isaiah 14:12-14 culminates in his five "I will's." They do not express a desire to be unlike God, but rather to be like Him (Isa. 14:14). In the New Testament his purpose is seen illustrated in a great masterpiece--the Man of Sin. The most detailed revelation concerning this ruler of the Tribulation is given in II Thessalonians 2. It is clearly stated that Satan is the one who energizes this lawless ruler (II Thess. 2:9). The desire of the Man of Sin is found in verse 4: "so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." The statement also shows that he really thinks he is God. Self-delusion of the magnitude declared here is beyond comprehension. All of his actions speak of one who is operating in complete independence from all others, except the one who is his real master--Satan.

This study of the basic revelation of Satan seen in the New Testament through his names has determined him to be an adversary of God and His people. This is not to be understood as

a desire to be unlike God. He is often mistakenly supposed to be the proponent of such immense sins as those recorded in Galatians 5:17-21. A careful study of the passage involved will demonstrate that these are not sins of Satan, but they are sins of the flesh.

THE REVELATION CONCERNING HIS PROGRAM

The program of Satan according to the New Testament may be conveniently divided into three major parts. Satan is concerned about the world, the church and the nation Israel. His attitudes toward each of these groups differ, and the way in which he operates with respect to them also differs.

Satan and the World

The particular word for "world" in view here is the Greek term kosmos. The definition given in the New Scofield Reference Bible will be sufficient for the purposes of this chapter.

In the sense of the present world system, the ethically bad sense of the word refers to the order or arrangement under which Satan has organized the world of unbelieving mankind upon his cosmic principles of force, greed, selfishness, ambition, and pleasure.⁴²

The word is found about 185 times in the New Testament,⁴³ with well over half of the references appearing in John's writings (Gospel of John, 78 times; I John, 22; II John, 1; Revelation, 3). Paul uses the word 46 times.

Direct references to Satan's relationship to this system are not plentiful. The Bible does reveal that Satan is in authority over the world system (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). The whole world system is said to be resting in Satan (I John 5:19, Ck). Therefore, it is not surprising to find few notices of Satan's relationship to it. As far as he is concerned, it is safe territory. He dominates it for the time being. The uniform testimony of the New Testament is that the world system is evil (Jas. 1:27; 4:4; II Pet. 1:4; 2:20; I John 5:4).

However, there are some specific things which Satan does do with respect to the world. According to II Corinthians 4:3, 4, Satan blinds the eyes of unsaved people to the gospel. He snatches the Word of God from their hearts before it can take root (Matt. 13:19; Luke 8:22). He actively energizes them to be disobedient to God (Eph. 2:2). He causes them to be content to lie in his power (I John 5:19). He makes the unsaved willing to do his will (John 8:44; Eph. 2:2, 3).

More information is given in the New Testament regarding the believers' relationship to the world. The Christian is not of the world (John 17:14, 16). The world hates the believer (John 15:18, 19). He is not to love the world (I John 2:15). The things of the world may be used by the Christian, but he is not to abuse them (I Cor. 7:29-31).⁴⁴

Satan will use the world to advance his purpose which is to be like God and receive adoration and worship. Evidence for this may be seen in the way he attempted to use the world to obtain the worship of Christ (Matt. 4:9).

Satan and the Church

It is extremely important for a Christian to realize the nature and methods of Satan's attacks upon him. One does not have to be ignorant of his methods (II Cor. 2:11). If we are ignorant of them, it is because of a failure to study the Word since this information is found there. Victory over Satan cannot possibly be won unless the Christian studies the information given in the Bible regarding these matters, and then, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, applies what he learns to his own life.

The Saints' Attitudes. Several preliminary matters ought to be recognized before one considers the equipment God has given to protect oneself against the attacks of Satan. First, the Christian must be "sober" (I Pet. 5:8). The word in the original text (*nēphō*) means "to be well-balanced, self-controlled." Second, he is to be "vigilant" (I Pet. 5:8). The idea here is "to be on the alert, be watchful, wide awake." Both of these characteristics are necessary in any battle, but they are particularly necessary in spiritual battles. Third, the believer must be "humble" (Jas. 4:6, 7). A humble Christian will be a dependent Christian which is the idea of "submit yourselves. . .to God" (verse 7). Fourth, it is necessary to be strong in God's power when the battle is raging (Eph. 6:10). The verb form "be strong" is a present passive imperative, indicating that the strength comes from another, and it is continuously needed. Fifth, he must be knowledgeable about the workings and limitations of Satan. Satan is not omniscient, so he cannot read the minds of believers. He cannot attack the Christian any time he desires. Ephesians 6:13 speaks of the "evil day" which evidently is the day of his attack (cf. Luke 22:31, 32; Job 1, 2). The believer will never undergo trials which are beyond his resources to meet successfully (I Cor. 10:13). Furthermore, the Christian is to know the methods Satan uses in his attacks (II Cor. 2:11). The Word clearly outlines the areas where he will attack. It behooves the saint to be on guard with respect to these areas of his life.

The Satanic Attacks. Two major points are to be noted. First, the Satanic attacks are to be distinguished from other attacks--the attacks of the flesh and the world. In particular the attacks of the flesh are often confused with the attacks of Satan. The attacks of the flesh come from within (Rom 7:17, 18; Gal. 5:17). Satan attacks from without (Eph. 6:12, 13, 16). The works of the flesh are listed in Galatians 5:19-21. Satan cannot control the sin nature from within, and he may have devised the world system in order to control the flesh from without so that it would do his bidding (I John 2:15, 16; cf. I Cor. 7:5). The world system is the outward appeal to the inward flesh.

It is important to recognize this principle because the defenses are different in each case. To attempt to fight against the flesh spells defeat, because that is not the Scriptural defense. Failing to fight against the attacks of Satan will spell defeat, because this is God's method for conquering Satan. The world is another foe which needs to be studied so that the proper defense is employed when that enemy approaches.

Second, the Satanic attacks are described in the Word. These may be divided into two general categories. For the sake of brevity, they will simply be listed without comment. The general attacks against believers should be recognized. They include the following: he accuses believers (Rev. 12:10); he hinders their work (I Thess. 2:18); he sows tares among them (Matt. 13:38, 39); he causes them to be persecuted (Rev. 2:10); and he uses demons to defeat their Christian life (Eph. 6:11, 12).

The special attacks against believers include the following: he tempts them by physical means and circumstances to become disappointed, discouraged and doubting (Acts 18:9; II Cor. 12:9; Job 1, 2); he tempts to cowardice in spiritual matters (II Tim. 1:7; Luke 22:31, 32; I Pet. 5:8); he tempts them to lie (Acts 5:3, 4); he tempts them to be proud (I Tim. 3:6); he tempts them to have an unforgiving spirit (II Cor. 2:10, 11); he tempts them to steal (Eph. 4:27, 28); he tempts them to use filthy speech (Eph. 4:27, 29); he tempts them to laziness (I Tim. 5:13-15); he tempts them to tale-bearing (I Tim. 5:13-15); and he tempts them to become busybodies (I Tim. 5:13-15).⁴⁵

The Spiritual Armor. The key passage which describes the armor provided to meet the attacks of Satan is found in Ephesians 6:11-18. It is a familiar section of the Word, but three important things should be noted when the armor is discussed. First, the enemy should be noted. The enemy is twofold--the devil and demons (verses 11, 12). They are not flesh and blood. If they were, it might be an easier battle. It should be carefully underscored that other believers are not the enemy.

Second, the equipment should be noted. The whole armor must be put on when Satan attacks (verses 11, 13). The purpose is to enable the believer to stand, not run (verses 11, 13, 14). The Christian is not actively fighting every moment of his life, but only when the attacks take place (Luke 4:13).⁴⁶ This is the reason vigilance is constantly needed. When not fighting, he is to rest in the Lord (Phil. 4:5-9). When the armor is used, Satan will flee, and we need not be soldiers in this sense until he attacks again (Jas. 4:6, 7; I Pet. 5:8, 9).

Each piece of the armor need not be discussed in detail, but suggestions may be made concerning the effectiveness of each piece. The armor does have sufficient parts to meet all of Satan's attacks. The loins girt about with truth may protect against lying and tale bearing. The breastplate of righteousness may protect against pride. The feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace can assist against stealing and idleness. The shield of faith is effective against doubt. The helmet of salvation will be effective against discouragement, cowardice, disappointment and an unforgiving spirit. The sword of the Spirit will protect against filthy talk and being a busybody.⁴⁷

Third, the environment in which the armor is to be put on is prayer (verse 18).

Satan and Israel

Satan does have particular operations with respect to Israel, and the emphasis seems to be different in three major periods of her history.

Satan Blinds. There is a general blinding against the gospel by Satan which extends to all of the unsaved (II Cor. 4:4). However, there appears to be a special blindness placed upon the eyes of unsaved Jews (Rom. 11:25). Satan is not the source of this second blindness (Isa. 6:9, 10).

Satan Beguiles. During the first half of the Tribulation the Jews will enter into a covenant relationship with the Antichrist (Dan. 9:27). Pentecost believes that "This covenant deceives many in Israel into believing that this 'man of sin' is God (II Thess. 2:3)."⁴⁸ It is in reality a covenant with death (Ezek. 28:15, 18). Israel will be deluded by Satan into thinking that they can receive protection from his servant, the Man of Sin.

Satan Buffets. At the middle of the Tribulation Satan is cast out of heaven and he turns his wrath upon the nation Israel (Rev. 12:13-17). He persecutes them with tremendous wrath for three and one-half years (verses 15, 17). This continues until the Second Coming of Christ. Then the Lord Himself will deliver His people.

THE REVELATION CONCERNING HIS PENALTY

The end of Satan's ministry is clearly set forth in the Word. Only a brief outline is necessary to present the overall picture.

Satan's Judgment Enacted

The Lord Himself, just before His death on the cross, indicated that Satan was to be judged by His death on the cross. His specific statements are found in John 12:31 and 16:11. Two other Biblical statements may cast light upon this event, and they are found in Colossians 2:14, 15 and Hebrews 2:14. Although Satan's judgment was made certain at the cross, it was not executed at that time. This is obvious when one reads subsequent to the cross that Satan is the god of this age (II Cor. 4:4). Further study of the New Testament points out that the execution of the sentence which has been passed will take place at a future date, and in several stages.

Satan's Judgment Executed

The three stages of Satan's judgment are as follows:⁴⁹

Cast Out of Heaven. Revelation 12:7-12 contains the information about Satan's war with Michael and his angels. Satan is defeated in this encounter and he is cast out of heaven. From this point he is restricted in his activity to the earth (verse 8). Heaven rejoices when his presence is removed (verse 12). On the other hand, it initiates a period of great persecution on the earth.

Cast Into the Abyss. Revelation 20:1-3 gives the description of this important event. It will occur at the Second Coming of Christ. Satan will then be bound for 1000 years.

Cast Into the Lake of Fire. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:10). This is the place which was prepared as the permanent abode for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41).

CONCLUSION

The importance of Satan as he is revealed in the New Testament cannot be properly appreciated until the scope of his work is understood. This is the attempt of the present study. Some details no doubt have been omitted, but the overall picture is plain. His ministry is so varied that no single name is adequate to encompass all of his work. His primary function seems to be as an adversary to God and His program. He is an adversary in the sense that he desires to be what God is. It does not appear to be Scriptural to suppose that Satan desires to be anything except like God. His power is formidable, but it is definitely limited. His program includes all segments of society--the world, the church and the Jews. Yet his ultimate destiny has been determined by Christ's death on the cross as a judgment for his sin.

We ought to be thankful for the complete picture which the Word reveals concerning Satan. Only as we know this information can we successfully meet the attacks of Satan. It should also bring comfort to the heart of the saint to know that victory is possible through God's provision.

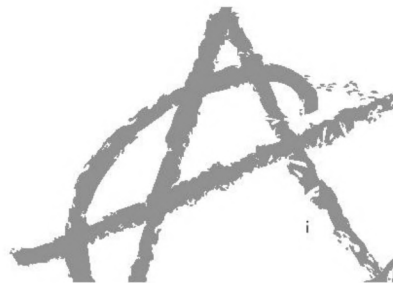
DOCUMENTATION

1. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press,
2. Lewis S. Chafer, Systematic Theology (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947), II, p. 33; C. Theodore Schwarze, The Program of Satan (Chicago: Good News Publishers, 1947), pp. 201, 202.
3. J. Dwight Pentecost, Things To Come (Grand Rapids: Dunham Publishing Company, 1958), p. 334, quoting Arthur W. Pink, The Antichrist, pp. 59-75.

4. Gerhard Kittel, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), I, p. 4.
5. Ibid., III, 636.
6. Herman A. Hoyt, An Exposition of the Book of Revelation (Winona Lake: Brethren Missionary Herald Company, 1966), p. 65.
7. Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-Lexicon, p. 73.
8. The following verse, verse 15, makes reference to some of these widows already having turned aside after Satan. The word gar introduces this verse and shows its relation to the previous verse. The articular participle of antikeimai is used of the Man of Sin in II Thessalonians 2:4. He is the one energized by Satan (II Thess. 2:9). Therefore, there are some indications that the word "adversary" in I Timothy 5:14 may refer to Satan.
9. All references to the number of times a word is found in the New Testament are derived from W. F. Moulton and S. A. Geden, A Concordance to the Greek Testament (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1926), unless otherwise indicated.
10. Kittel, Theological Dictionary, I, 606.
11. Ibid.
12. Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon, 138.
13. W. E. Vine, An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words (London: Oliphants Ltd., 1940), I, 116.
14. Ibid.
15. Kittel, Theological Dictionary, I, 607.
16. The word Satanas is found 35 times in the New Testament, but two of these references may not speak of Satan specifically. See discussion under Satan.
17. Kittel, Theological Dictionary, II, 73.
18. Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon, 181.
19. Kittel, Theological Dictionary, II, 281.
20. Hoyt, An Exposition, 62.
21. Vine, An Expository Dictionary, II, 30.
22. Ibid., 82.
23. Another view of this problem is seen in the following statement by Lewis S. Chafer, Systematic Theology, II, pp. 65, 66. "The statement that Satan 'was a murderer from the beginning' seems to be the result of Satan's influence upon other creatures. Whether there is any sense in which this charge might apply to Satan's injury to other angels or not, it is easily traceable that he seduced men into sin which subjected them to death. It is reasonable to assume--and not without Scripture warrant--that the one who caused man to sin also caused the lesser angels to sin. . . . The satanic principle manifested in Cain moved Cain to slay Abel who, in turn, manifested the divine purpose and ideal. According to the Bible, murder is in the intent as well as in the overt act (I John 3:12, 15). Satan slew Adam and Eve, though their years were many before death came to them. They who were by creation as immortal as the angels, paid the assured price of death which Satan's counsel imposed upon them."
24. Vine, An Expository Dictionary, III, 212. This view is also held by Kenneth S. Wuest, Ephesians and Colossians in the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), p. 62, and generally by Brooke F. Westcott, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (London: Macmillan and Co., 1906), p. 30.

25. Edward G. Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1964), p. 237.
26. Alan M. Stibbs, The First Epistle General of Peter (London: The Tyndale Press, 1959), p. 172.
27. Vine, An Expository Dictionary, II, 346; Homer A. Kent, Jr., The Pastoral Epistles (Chicago: Moody Press, 1958), p. 303.
28. A general survey of the New Testament usage of the titles Satan and Devil may be helpful. Foerster in The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, II, p. 79 states: "As concerns the alternation between satanas and diabolos in the NT, no material distinction may be asserted. Study of the Synopt. and Ac. suggest that Satanas is closer to Palestinian usage; in the story of the temptation Mk. uses satanas and the par. have diabolos, though satanas is used by Jesus Himself in Mt. 4:10. Cf. Mk. 4:15 and par. In Ac. 10:38; 13:10 diabolos is used to Gentiles, in contrast to Ac. 5:3; 26:18. There can hardly be any particular reason for the alternation in Jn. and Rev. (cf. Jn. 13:2 and 13:27; Rev. 12:9. . .). Paul generally has satanas, though diabolos is found in Eph. (4:27; 6:11) and (with two exceptions) the Past. The Catholic Epistles also use diabolos."
29. Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon, 752.
30. Vine, An Expository Dictionary, III, 347.
31. Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon, 411.
32. The same verb found in I Corinthians 5:5 is also found here. It is the verb paradidōmi.
33. F. C. Jennings, Satan: His Person, Work, Place and Destiny (New York: A. C. Gaebel, n.d.), pp. 154-162.
34. Donald G. Barnhouse, The Invisible War (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1964), p. 131.
35. Alfred Rahlfs (ed.), Septuaginta (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935), II, p. 926.
36. See "The New Testament Doctrine of Demons" by Charles R. Smith, a graduate research paper, Grace Theological Seminary, for an expression of the view that Satan is an angel.
37. Kent, The Pastoral Epistles, 149.
38. Jennings, Satan, 74-80.
39. Barnhouse, The Invisible, 132.
40. Chafer, Systematic, II, 91.
41. Ibid., 91, 92.
42. C. I. Scofield (ed.), The New Scofield Reference Bible (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 1365.
43. Almost 30 pages are devoted to the exposition of this word in the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, III, pp. 868-895.
44. H. Lavern Schafer, Unpublished Class Notes, San Francisco Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary.
45. Ibid.
46. Note the words "that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day" found in Ephesians 6:13. This may be further substantiation for the point that the Christian is not always at war, but only in the evil day.
47. Schafer, Unpublished Class Notes.
48. Pentecost, Things, 250.
49. Lewis S. Chafer, Satan (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Ass'n, 1927); Lewis S. Chafer, Major Bible Themes (Findlay, Ohio: Dunham Publishing Co., 1926), pp. 126, 127.

THE STRATEGY
OF SATAN



THE
STRATEGY
OF **SATON**

HOW TO DETECT
& DEFEAT HIM

WARREN W. WIERSBE



TYNDALE HOUSE PUBLISHERS, INC.
CAROL STREAM, ILLINOIS

These studies originally appeared in another form in my book *Creative Christian Living*. I want to thank the publishers, Fleming H. Revell Company, for permitting me to adapt the material for this present book.

Visit Tyndale's exciting Web site at www.tyndale.com

TYNDALE and Tyndale's quill logo are registered trademarks of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

The Strategy of Satan

Copyright © 1979 by Warren W. Wiersbe. All rights reserved.

Designed by Mark A. Lane II

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *New American Standard Bible*®, copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations marked KJV are taken from *The Holy Bible*, King James Version.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 79-63647.

ISBN-13: 978-0-8423-6665-6

ISBN-10: 0-8423-6665-2

Printed in the United States of America

14 13 12 11 10 09 08
40 39 38 37 36 35 34

To the memory of
PETER DEYNEKA, SR.

Contents

Introduction	ix
Chapter One THE DECEIVER	
1.1 Satan's Target—Your Mind	4
1.2 Satan's Weapon—Lies	7
1.3 Satan's Purpose—To Make You Ignorant of God's Will	13
1.4 Your Defense—The Inspired Word of God	15
Chapter Two THE DESTROYER	
2.1 Satan's Target—Your Body	27
2.2 Satan's Weapon—Suffering	33
2.3 Satan's Purpose—To Make You Impatient with God's Will	37
2.4 Your Defense—The Imparted Grace of God	40
Chapter Three THE RULER	
3.1 Satan's Target—Your Will	51
3.2 Satan's Weapon—Pride	53
3.3 Satan's Purpose—To Make You Independent of God's Will	57
3.4 Your Defense—The Indwelling Spirit of God	61

Chapter Four	THE ACCUSER	
4.1	Satan's Target—Your Heart and Conscience	74
4.2	Satan's Weapon—Accusation	76
4.3	Satan's Purpose—To Bring an Indictment by God's Will	77
4.4	Your Defense—The Interceding Son of God	80
Chapter Five	LIVING BY FAITH IN GOD	89
Chapter Six	DON'T GIVE SATAN A BEACHHEAD!	101
Chapter Seven	WHEN SATAN GOES TO CHURCH.	115
Chapter Eight	WHAT TO WEAR TO THE WAR.	127
Chapter Nine	SATAN'S ARMY	143
Chapter Ten	SATAN AND THE HOME	155
	For Additional Information	161

INTRODUCTION
**WHAT THIS
BOOK IS ABOUT
AND HOW YOU
SHOULD USE IT**

This book is about Satan and the strategy he has to wreck your Christian life and (if possible) destroy you.

Four persons in the Old Testament had a direct confrontation with Satan. From their experiences we will learn

*the targets Satan aims at in your life;
the weapons he uses to attack you;
the purposes that he wants to achieve; and
the defenses God has provided for you.*

Please keep in mind that this book is a manual of arms for the Christian soldier. It is not a devotional reader for the believer who has gone AWOL. It is a deadly serious guidebook for the dedicated Christian who is on the battlefield and wants to know how to win.

Please do not speed-read these pages. Read them carefully, especially the many quotations

from God's Word. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand and assimilate these truths. There is no "padding" in these chapters. These studies represent the essentials—the rock-bottom fundamentals—of what God has taught me about the Christian warfare through many years of studying and battling. I have proved these truths in my own life and ministry.

No doubt Satan will do everything he can to keep you from benefiting from this book. He will distract you and detour you. He will seek to confuse you, or perhaps make you critical. He will arrange interruptions. I suggest you ask the Lord for his help and protection as you study these pages. "Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). *Positionally*, you are in Christ and delivered from the power of Satan.

For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.
Colossians 1:13

My aim in this book is to help you experience this victory *practically*.

The truths in these pages will do you no good unless they are put into practice. Satan enjoys seeing Christians get a head knowledge of victory without a heart experience, because this lulls believers into a false security, and Satan finds them an easy prey. It is not the *reading* of truth, or even the *enjoying* of truth that brings the blessing. It is the *doing* of the truth. Therefore, determine with the Spirit's help to put these truths into practice.

Remember: you are not fighting *for* victory,

but *from* victory, for Jesus Christ has already defeated Satan!

When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities [Satanic powers], He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him [Christ].
Colossians 2:15

Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out. John 12:31

And they overcame him [Satan] because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. Revelation 12:11

Now, on to victory!

THE DECEIVER

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE: **EVE**

1.1 SATAN'S TARGET: your mind

1.2 SATAN'S WEAPON: lies

1.3 SATAN'S PURPOSE: to make you ignorant
of God's will

1.4 YOUR DEFENSE: the inspired Word of God

the **STRATEGY** of **SATAN**

ONE
The Deceiver

"He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies." JOHN 8:44

And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. REVELATION 12:9

But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.
2 CORINTHIANS 11:3

For many deceivers have gone out into the world.
2 JOHN 1:7

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the

trees of the garden, we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"

The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

GENESIS 3:1-7

1.1 SATAN'S TARGET

YOUR MIND

When Satan wanted to lead the first man and woman into sin, he started by attacking the woman's mind. This is made clear in 2 Corinthians 11:3.

But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

Why would Satan want to attack your mind? Because your mind is the part of the image of God where God communicates with you and reveals his will to you. It is unfortunate that some Christians have minimized the significance of the mind, because the Bible emphasizes its importance.

Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him. Colossians 3:9-10

So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Ephesians 4:17-24

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

God renews our lives by renewing our minds, and he renews our minds through his truth. This truth is the Word of God.

Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.
John 17:17

If Satan can get you to believe a lie, then he can begin to work in your life to lead you into sin. This is why he attacks the mind, and this is why we must protect our minds from the attacks of the wicked one.

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. Philippians 4:8

"If it is not true," Paul writes, "do not let it enter your mind."

In recent years, science has discovered many fascinating things about the human mind. Like a computer, your mind can store facts and impressions—and even emotions—and recall them years later. Your mind can reach into the past through memory, or it can reach into the future through imagination. Your thinking affects your feeling and your willing.

For as he thinks within himself, so he is. Proverbs 23:7

The doctor says, "You are what you eat." The psychologist says, "You are what you think." Satan knows the tremendous power of your mind, and he tries to capture it for himself.

The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You. Isaiah 26:3

For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. Romans 8:6

Your mind affects your whole being. While I do not totally agree with the “success psychology” and “healing psychology” of our day, I must admit that attitudes are important to health and success in life. The exciting new field of “holistic medicine” draws upon the influences of the mind to help the patient cure himself. Sales managers “psych up” their salesmen with thoughts of accomplishment and success, just as coaches do their football teams. While thinking alone does not make it so, it certainly helps!

1.2 SATAN’S WEAPON

LIES

Satan came to Eve as the serpent, the subtle deceiver.

[This is] the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. Revelation 12:9

There is no truth in him . . . for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:44

It is important that you notice the steps Satan took in getting Eve to believe his lie.

HE QUESTIONED GOD’S WORD. “Indeed, has God said . . .?” He did not deny that God had spoken; he simply questioned whether God had really said what Eve thought he had said. “Perhaps

you misunderstood what God spoke,” is Satan’s suggestion. “You owe it to yourself to rethink what he said.” It is worth noting that in this suggestion Satan is also questioning God’s goodness. “If God really loved you, he wouldn’t keep something from you.” He tried the same approach with our Lord in the wilderness: “If you are God’s beloved Son, why are you hungry?”

HE DENIED GOD’S WORD. “You surely shall not die!” It is but a short step from questioning God’s Word to denying it. Of course, neither Adam nor Eve had ever seen death. All they had to go on was the Word of God, *but this was all they needed*. If Eve had not listened to Satan’s questioning God’s Word, she would never have fallen into his trap when he denied God’s Word.

HE SUBSTITUTED HIS OWN LIE. “You will be like God!” Adam and Eve were already made in the image of God, but Satan tempted them with an even greater privilege: to be like God! This was, of course, Satan’s great ambition when he was Lucifer, God’s angelic servant.

“How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly, in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’” Isaiah 14:12-14

Satan is a created being, a creature, but he wanted to be worshiped and served like the Creator. It was this attitude that led him to rebel against God and seek to establish his own kingdom. "You will be like God" is the one gigantic lie that has controlled civilization since the fall of man.

For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie [literally "the lie"], and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.
Romans 1:25

Satan desires worship and service, and Jesus Christ would give him neither!

Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'" Matthew 4:8-10

Satan's lie, "You will be like God," motivates and controls much of our civilization today. Man is seeking to pull himself up by his own bootstraps. He is working to build a utopia on earth and possibly take it to outer space. Through education, psychiatry, religions of one kind or another (most of which ignore Jesus Christ, sin, and salvation), and better environment, men are defying God and deifying themselves. They are playing right into the hands of Satan.

How did Eve respond to Satan's approach? She responded by making three mistakes that led her into sin.

SHE TOOK AWAY FROM GOD'S WORD. In verse 2, Eve omitted the word "freely." God's original word in Genesis 2:16 was, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely." We get the impression that Eve caught Satan's subtle suggestion, "God is holding out on you!" When you start to question or forget the grace of God and the goodness of God, you will find it much easier to disobey the will of God.

SHE ADDED TO GOD'S WORD. We do not find the words "or touch it" in God's original command. They may have been there, but they are not in the record. Not only did Eve make God's original word *less gracious* by omitting the word "freely," but she also made the commandment *more grievous* by adding "or touch it." "His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3). Satan wants us to believe they are burdensome, and that he has something better to offer.

SHE CHANGED GOD'S WORD. God did not say, "Lest you die." He said, "For in the day that you eat from it you will surely die" (Genesis 2:17). The penalty for disobedience as presented by the enemy did not seem as harsh; therefore, Eve could consider forsaking God's will and obeying Satan's will.

Once you have treated God's Word in this fashion, you are wide open for the devil's final trick. He merely permitted Eve to consider the tree *apart from God's Word*. "Get a good look at it! See it as it really is!" It was "good for food . . . a delight to the eyes . . . desirable to make one wise" (Genesis 3:6). She had to make a choice: God's Word or Satan's

word? She rejected God's Word, believed Satan, and sinned. You and I have been suffering from the consequences of her decision, as has the whole human race.

God accomplishes his will on earth through *truth*; Satan accomplishes his purposes through *lies*. When the child of God believes God's truth, then the Spirit of God can work in power; for the Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of truth" (John 16:13). But when a person believes a lie, then Satan goes to work in that life; "for he is a liar, and the father of lies" (John 8:44). Faith in God's truth leads to victory; faith in Satan's lies leads to defeat.

However, Satan never advertises, "This is a lie!" He is the serpent, the deceiver, and he always masquerades his lies as God's truth.

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 2 Corinthians 11:13-14

Satan did not approach Eve in his true nature; he masqueraded by using the serpent. Satan is a counterfeiter, an imitator.

There are *counterfeit Christians*.

I have been . . . [in] dangers among false brethren. 2 Corinthians 11:26

"The tares are the sons of the evil one." Matthew 13:38

"You are of your father the devil." John 8:44

There is a *counterfeit gospel*.

But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! Galatians 1:8

There are counterfeit *ministers of the gospel*.

For even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. 2 Corinthians 11:14-15

There is a *counterfeit righteousness*.

For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. Romans 10:3

There is even a counterfeit "*church of Satan*."

I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews [i.e., God's people] and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Revelation 2:9

And this counterfeit church has *counterfeit doctrines*.

But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. 1 Timothy 4:1

All of this will end, of course, in the appearance of a

counterfeit Christ—the Antichrist—who will accept for Satan the worship and service of the whole world.

Then that lawless one will be revealed . . . the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish.
2 Thessalonians 2:8-10

All who dwell on the earth will worship him.
Revelation 13:8

Satan's target is your mind, and his weapon is lies. What is his purpose?

1.3 SATAN'S PURPOSE

TO MAKE YOU IGNORANT OF GOD'S WILL

Satan attacks God's Word because God's Word reveals God's will.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105

I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart. Psalm 40:8

Apart from the Word of God, we have no sure understanding of the will of God. The will of God is the expression of God's love for us.

The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart from generation to generation. Psalm 33:11

God's will comes from God's heart. It is not an impersonal thing, but a very personal matter with the Lord. He has a personal understanding of each of his children—their natures, their names, their needs—and he tailors his plans accordingly.

God wants us to *know* his will.

The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will. Acts 22:14

He also wants us to *understand* his will.

So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Ephesians 5:17

He wants this understanding of his will to *fill* us and *control* us.

We have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.
Colossians 1:9

The result of all this is the believer

doing the will of God from the heart. Ephesians 6:6

God's will is not a duty; it is a delight. The Christian delights to discover the will of God and then obey from the heart. The will of God is his nourishment.

"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work." John 4:34

You and I must pray (as did Epaphras) that we

may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. Colossians 4:12

If Satan can make you ignorant of God's will, he will rob you of all the glorious blessings God has planned for your life. You will make bad decisions, get involved in sinful activities, and build the wrong kind of life. And, sad to say, *you will influence others to go wrong!* In my ministry of the Word in many places, I have seen the tragic consequences of lives out of the will of God.

Christians who are ignorant of God's will lose the enjoyment of God's peace and power. They cannot grow into their full potential, nor can they accomplish what God has planned for them. Instead of traveling first-class, they travel second- or third-class, complaining all the way. They live like paupers because they have cut themselves off from God's great wealth. They spend their lives—even worse, they *waste* their lives—when they could be *investing* their lives.

But the one who does the will of God lives forever.
1 John 2:17

1.4 YOUR DEFENSE

THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD

Only the inspired Word of God can reveal and defeat the devil's lies. You cannot reason with Satan, nor (as Eve discovered) can you even safely converse with him. Man's wisdom is no match for

Satan's cunning. Our only defense is the inspired Word of God.

It was this weapon that our Lord used when he was tempted by Satan in the wilderness.

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command His angels concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, so that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'"

Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him. Matthew 4:1-11

Our Lord did not use his divine power to defeat Satan. He used the same weapon that is available

to us today: the Word of God. Jesus was led by the Spirit of God and filled with the Word of God. As we shall see in a later chapter, the Word of God is “the sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17); and the Holy Spirit can enable us to wield that sword effectively. If you and I are going to defeat Satan’s lies, we must depend on the Word of God. This fact lays several responsibilities upon us.

WE MUST KNOW GOD’S WORD. There is no reason why any believer should be ignorant of his Bible. The Word of God is available to us in many translations. We have the Holy Spirit within us to teach us the truths of the Word (John 16:13-15). There are a multitude of Bible study helps available. We can turn on the radio and listen to excellent preachers and Bible teachers expound God’s Word. In local churches, there are pastors and teachers who minister the Word; and in many areas, there are seminars and Bible study groups for further study. If an intelligent believer today does not know his Bible, it is his or her own fault!

This means, of course, taking time to *read* and *study* the Bible. No one will master God’s Word in a lifetime of study, but we should learn all we can. We must *make* time, not “find time,” to read and study the Word of God. Just as a machinist studies the shop manual, and the surgeon studies his medical texts, so the Christian must study the Word of God. Bible study is not a luxury; it is a necessity.

WE MUST MEMORIZE GOD’S WORD. Our Lord did not have a concordance with him in the wilderness! He reached back into the Books of Moses, selected

Deuteronomy, and quoted three verses from that book to silence Satan. Most adults think that Bible memorization is for children in Sunday school, when actually it is for *every believer*. Adult Christians need the Word far more than the children do, although it is good for children to memorize God's Word.

Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You. Psalm 119:11

The law of his God is in his heart; his steps do not slip. Psalm 37:31

I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart. Psalm 40:8

If you do not have a systematic Bible memory program, get one started. Your pastor can give you counsel and no doubt provide materials for you. Check your local Christian bookstore for Bible memory helps.

WE MUST MEDITATE ON GOD'S WORD. Meditation is to the inner man what digestion is to the outer man. If you did not digest your food, you would sicken and die.

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Joshua 1:8

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. Psalm 1:2

Do you sincerely *delight* in the Word of God, or do you read it only out of duty? Do you rush through your “morning devotions,” or take time to feed on God’s truth? Measure yourself by these statements by the psalmist:

How sweet are Your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Psalm 119:103

I rise before dawn and cry for help; I wait for Your words. My eyes anticipate the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word. Psalm 119:147-148

I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches. Psalm 119:14

The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces. Psalm 119:72

Therefore I love Your commandments above gold, yes, above fine gold. Psalm 119:127

Here is a saint who would rather have God’s Word than food, sleep, or money! Early in the morning and late at night he meditated on the Word of God and enriched his soul. It is this kind of a Christian who is able to use the Word of God to defeat Satan and his lies.

WE MUST USE GOD’S WORD. The believer’s mind should become like a “spiritual computer.” It should be so saturated with Scripture that when he faces a decision or a temptation, he automatically remembers the Scriptures that relate to that

particular situation. It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to bring God's Word to our minds when we need it.

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

John 14:26

But the Spirit of God cannot remind you of something *that you have not learned!* You must first let him teach you the Word. You must memorize the Scripture that he opens up to you. Then the Spirit of God will be able to remind you of what you have learned, and you can use that truth to battle Satan. Please keep in mind that Satan knows the Bible far better than we do! And he is able to quote it!

The Spirit of God will enable you to use the Word of God in the battle against the devil. The Spirit will show you when Satan is "using" the Bible to promote his own lies, as he did with Jesus in the wilderness. Satan quoted Psalm 91:11-12, but he adapted it for his own purposes by omitting "in all your ways." God promises to protect us only when we are in his ways. If we foolishly go our own way, God is not obligated to care for us. This explains why Jesus replied, "On the other hand, it is written" (Matthew 4:7).

Jesus was comparing Scripture with Scripture. He was taking into consideration *the total message of the Bible* and not stopping (as did Satan) with one isolated passage. Satan enjoys taking verses out of context and using them to "prove" his false claims. You and I must have a grasp of *all Scripture* if we are to detect Satan's lies and defeat them.

It is important, too, that we look at the world around us through the “eyes” of the Bible. We must

walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

If we try to evaluate things around us on the basis of our own thinking and knowledge, we will get into trouble. We must believe that what God says about things in his Word is true.

Therefore I esteem right all Your precepts concerning everything. I hate every false way. Psalm 119:128

A business proposition may “look right” to the natural mind, but if it is not based on the truths of God’s Word, it will fail. A marriage may seem like “just the right thing” from the human perspective, but if it contradicts the Word of God, it is wrong. In my pastoral ministry, I have seen business deals fail and marriages collapse because they were not done according to the will of God. Somebody believed Satan’s lie.

TAKING INVENTORY

- 1** Do I spend time daily reading God’s Word and meditating on it?
- 2** Do I systematically seek to memorize Scripture?
- 3** Do I find myself automatically “thinking Bible” when I am tempted or when I face decisions, or must I telephone my Christian friends to get spiritual guidance?

- 4** Do I find myself better able to detect Satan's lies?
- 5** Are there any lies in my mind right now that I am believing?
- 6** Do I know God's will for my life? Do I really *want* to know?
- 7** Am I delighting in God's will and doing it from my heart?
- 8** Am I guilty of telling lies? Why do I do it?
- 9** Am I willing to take as true everything God's Word says about everything in my life? Or do I occasionally ask, "Has God *really* said that?" Do I argue with God's Word?
- 10** Is the Word of God becoming more wonderful to me? Do I enjoy it more than the natural pleasures of life, including eating and sleeping?

A Suggestion. Ask your pastor to suggest a Bible memory program for you and your family. If he doesn't have one, then check your local Christian bookseller for such a program. You can also check out resources from The Navigators at www.navigators.org.

FOR
ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION

There are many books available on the subject of Satan, demons, and the occult. Some of them are sensational; some are truly biblical. I can sincerely recommend the following:

The Christian Soldier and *The Christian Warfare* by Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Baker Book House). Dr. Lloyd-Jones is a master expositor who knows the human heart as well as he knows his Bible. These two volumes expound in detail Ephesians 6:10-20.

Angels, Elect and Evil by Dr. C. Fred Dickason (Moody Press). This is the best doctrinal treatment of this subject I have ever seen. Dr. Dickason has had wide experience in dealing with demons. He writes from the perspective of both a theologian and a practical counselor.

The Adversary by Mark I. Bubeck (Moody Press). Pastor Bubeck has had an unusual ministry in detecting and defeating demonic forces. This is an excellent companion volume to Dr. Dickason's book.